



Embassy of the United States of America
Office of Public Affairs
Baku, Azerbaijan

83, Azadlıq Prospekt
AZ1007 Baku, Azerbaijan
Email: seyidovag@state.gov

Phone: +(99412) 498 03 35
Fax: +(99412) 465 66 71
URL: azerbaijan.usembassy.gov

PRESS RELEASE

U.S. , Azerbaijani Experts Discuss Innovative Approaches to Museum Programming April 26, 2012

Four museum specialists from America's national museum -- the Smithsonian Institution -- conducted workshops with over 120 Azerbaijani museum experts from April 22 -- 30 to discuss creating interactive exhibits and using social media for museum programming. The workshops were organized by the United States Embassy in partnership with the Azerbaijani Ministry of Culture.

Speaking about his experience in Azerbaijan, Paul Michael Taylor, Director of the Smithsonian's Asian Cultural History Program, said "Azerbaijan's history is incredibly important, both for the region and the world as a whole. It is wonderful to be able to learn about that history from the skilled experts who we met on this trip, and to share ideas for future research and collaboration." Chris Jones, Cultural Affairs Officer at the U.S. Embassy, added, "we are thrilled to support this kind of cultural cooperation between the United States and Azerbaijan. In addition to highlighting the rich history of Azerbaijan, it underlines the deep friendship between our two countries." Jones thanked the Ministry of Culture for its support and looks forward to implementing many similar projects in the future.

The Smithsonian experts also visited Gala Historical Reserve, the Gobustan Petroglyphs, the National Carpet Museum, the National Art Museum, and the Museum of Historical Instruments. On April 30 they will meet with Minister of Culture Abulfas Garayev to discuss the results of their program.

The following Smithsonian representatives participated in the program:

Dr. Paul Michael Taylor, Director of the Asian Cultural History Program and Curator of Asian, European and Middle Eastern Ethnology

Jasper Waugh-Quaerbarth, Researcher, Asian Cultural History Program

Jared Koller, Researcher, Asian Cultural History Program

Trevor Loomis Merrion, Researcher, Asian Cultural History Program

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